

## Staff Senate Meeting Minutes

12/14/2016

Brownsville Campus-MAIN 2.402

### Guest Presenters:

- Doug Arney – Senior Associate VP for Operations
- Mike James – Chief Human Resources Officer
- Dr. Kristin Croyle-VP for Student Success

### Senators Present:

Michael Aldape, Oscar Barrera, Robert Cantu, Selene Castro, Veronica de la Garza, Peter James (PJ) Ehimika, David Elizondo, Maria Espinoza, DeAnna Garza, Milton Hernandez, Silverio Nieto, Bianca Otero, Lisa Peña, Gilbert Perez, Lisa Smith, Javier Zambrano

### Senators Absent:

Orlando Castaneda, Nelly Gomez, Alicia Morley, Linda Ufland

### Meeting:

- Michael called meeting to order 9:37am
- Establishment of Quorum:
  - Maria conducted roll call of senators to establish quorum; Orlando Castaneda, Nelly Gomez, Alicia Morley and Linda Ufland were absent
- Approval of Minutes:
  - DeAnna Garza motion to approve; Gilbert Perez seconded motion to approve minutes with corrections
  - Meeting minutes will be corrected and posted on website
- Committee Reports
  - Fundraising – have not met
  - Events – Skype meeting was held on 12/12/16, spoke on past events from the legacy institutions to think about the future and what they would like to bring forth. Spoke on 3 general items:
    - Social-purpose to bring Staff together
    - Awareness-work with Sustainability to schedule awareness throughout the campuses, i.e., turn off lights/computer in offices at the end of day, etc.
    - Service-get the Senate to wrap around a cause

- Communications – Skype meeting was held on 11/21/16, reported that the Staff Senate website is being worked on, Bianca and Lisa P. more information will be given under pending items section
  - Salary Study – met week before, reported that with the information from Human Resources not only to align on salary aspect but on job descriptions as well. Will be setting up a meeting with Mike James.
  - Constitution – met and went over Constitution membership and how it was setup with the new Organizational chart, new districts have been created and have to be added to the Constitution as well as for the Elections and Nominations.
  - Staff Development – have not met; informal communication to center on partnering with H/R
  - Business Processes – held meeting prior to Thanksgiving break; set up the mission to bring awareness of business processes, not make changes. Would like to partner with Faculty Senate on issues they have taken on and send out a Staff Survey for feedback on business procedures to send to administration.
- Pending Items
    - Mission Statement-Lisa S. worked on draft (short and sweet), Michael asked the Senators for recommendations via email so that it may be posted on the website
      - “To represent the staff of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley by serving as a liaison with administration, faculty, and students, while continuously upholding the mission of the University”
    - Website Update-Bianca and Lisa P. presented the “working” website, asked Senators for feedback on what areas to present on the main page and what to highlight.
      - Meet the Executive Board
      - Meet your Senators
      - Updated Senate Minutes
      - Website pages tab to expand on what we do
      - Photos-what to add, contact information (maybe similar to Advancement)
    - Question brought up by Norma Sada-Campus Facilities Operations: if on the website there will be an area where employees are able to send comments and if there’s a plan on following up and providing feedback to the person. Michael answered yes; if anonymous will be brought up at the regular Staff Senate meeting.
    - DeAnn asked if there was an option for anonymity and if the website will allow for the question to be submitted, website will be established for this to be allowed.
  - New Business
    - FLSA updates-Mike James reiterated the Department of Labor rule for qualifying employees for exempt status raised from \$35000 to \$47000, consideration for Academic Support titles equivalent to lowest level teaching salary with faculty. He also stated that due to an injunction brought by a federal judge in Texas, the process has been stopped for any changes until a final decision is made

- Question: Silverio-if an exempt employee should continue submitting timecard in regular way or under the new status, Mr. James stated to continue as to what current status is.
- November 22<sup>nd</sup> Memo-Mr. James spoke on the distribution of the \$750 merit payment to take place on 12/16. Over 1600 employees met the parameters, being:
  - Hired since November 1, 2015
  - 3.0 or above on Staff Evaluation
  - Up to date with compliance trainings
- He also stated that Human Resources will be looking at certain employees on a case by case basis. Mr. James also spoke on Phase I Salary Equity project. On 12/1 all jobs included have been loaded on the employee pay check for payroll on 1/2/17. These individuals are personnel who were migrated over to UTRGV to include IT, Physical Plant, University Police and some Administrative Support titles approximately 36% of job titles. Phase II will take place within next 12 months starting in January, these will be titles that are hard to fill due to the high level market competition, health professions, student support services.
  - Question: Phase II: How long will it take to complete? By the end of the year, 64% of the pay plan should be adjusted.
  - Question: Cheryl Taylor, University Marketing & Communication: Was the information provided by the Huron group used for the salary adjustments, Mike James-No
  - Question: Yanet McClanahan, Student Life: Where the funding coming from, within the department or institutional funds, Mike James more than likely from the institution.
- Lisa S. commented that the salary equity is on-going effort and that the entire pay plan is under review for market competitiveness.
- Sanctuary Campus Designation Feedback-Dr. Croyle addressed the Senate regarding the article in the Monitor and the 12/9 email from Dr. Bailey affirming the resources for students and some staff regarding UTRGV being an inclusive campus.
  - Question: PJ: what is the official stance of UTRGV, Dr. Croyle-regarding the email 1<sup>st</sup> priority will be the students. No one can share student records without student consent. Also not using the term sanctuary, using inclusive campus.
- News on SACSCOC Probationary Period-Dr. Bailey sent out an email regarding UTRGV's probationary status for the next 12 months. As of yet, there is no official notification on what the factors are. The Provost Office issued an email that our accreditation continues, students will continue receiving Financial Aid, operations continue. Dr. Croyle expressed that several prestigious institutions have been placed on probation. Lisa S. stressed that there is constant communication between UTRGV and SACSCOC to take steps on what is needed to be done for probationary status to be removed.
  - Question: Jaime Villanueva, Career Center: read email and probationary status eluded to a certain location/campus, Lisa S. responded that there were ten violations, no details, not one specific item until the list is received by SACSCOC

- Question: Yanet: suggested that something needs to come from the institution to squash the negativity-because this impacts enrollment, to perhaps train recruiters, campaigns, questionnaire on what we can do as an institution. Lisa S. responded that a message has been sent to Recruitment Office on how to handle accreditation questions.
  - DeAnna stated that as Senators, employees and students, we have the responsibility to remind people of the wonderful institution that UTRGV is, Jay re-iterated what DeAnna stated and that we just need to see what comes out of the SACSOC report.
- Lisa Pena motioned to adjourn meeting; Jay seconded the motion to adjourn
  - Meeting ended at 10:50 a.m.